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products, and increase the *produit net*. Rising prices of grain—even famine prices—were viewed by them with unmixed satisfaction; among the gains from rising prices were reckoned the increasing efforts the laborer would make to keep body and soul together. The Physiocrats begrudged the laborer his holidays, and used their influence with the church to cause feast days to coincide with Sundays. They rejoiced in the transformation of the landholding peasantry into a landless proletariat. They disapproved of wholesale inclosures and dispossession of the peasantry, to be sure, but this was only because such a policy was in contravention of the sacred right of private property—a good more essential to their system than was large-scale agriculture.

The author places in a new light the relations to the Physiocracy of Gournay and his school. The latter, too, were exponents of capitalism—industrial and commercial. They were moderate protectionists, not because they were doctrinal conservatives, but because the interests which they defended were not so clearly benefited by free trade as was agriculture. Fundamentally, it was not the antithesis of theory and practice that distinguished the schools; it was the opposition between practical interests.

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Land and Labour: Lessons from Belgium. By B. SEEBOHM ROWNTREE.

London: Macmillan, 1910. 8vo, pp. xx+633. \$3.50.

As the title suggests, Mr. Rowntree's study of Belgium is directed especially upon her system of land-tenure, with the purpose of drawing some lessons pertinent to the labor situation in England. The author pursued his investigation with great thoroughness; he devoted four years to his task, and had every assistance which public officials and private scholars could render. The result is an illuminating account of the social and economic life of modern Belgium from the point of view of the welfare of labor.

A description of the Belgian system of land-tenure is the foundation of the whole work. On the basis of an independent and most laborious investigation, conducted with the co-operation of the government, the number of landowners is estimated at 719,986, or 10 per cent of the total population. Three-quarters of these landed proprietors own less than five acres apiece; the size of the average holding is 9.5 acres. The average size of the plots cultivated as separate undertakings is 5.7 acres, and two-thirds of these plots are less than 2.5 acres in extent. Of the cultivators, 72 per cent are renters, 28 per cent, owners.

The cause of this minute subdivision of the land is found in the laws of succession, which provide that when a man dies his estate is to be divided equally among his children. The effects of this system of small holdings are far-reaching. It tends to increase the intensiveness of cultivation, to check the drift of population to the cities, to lower urban rentals, to mitigate the hardships of unemployment, and to raise wages in the towns. On the other hand, it has its share in raising agricultural rents, which are twice as high as in England.

Not less beneficent is the Belgian system of transportation, with its well-built highways, its main and narrow-gauge railroads, and its convenient waterways. Of especial importance are the low commutation fares, permitting factory-workers to

live in the country, and the light, narrow-gauge lines which bring every farm within reach of a market. Commendation is given also to the institutions for co-operative credit, which enable the farmer to borrow on easy terms to buy a cow, or the artisan to build a house.

Co-operation in other forms, and labor unions have by no means the importance in Belgium that they have in England. They are overshadowed by the claims of party allegiance, which compels Liberals, Catholics, and Socialists to maintain separate labor organizations. Education, too, does less to improve the laborer's efficiency than in many countries, while poor-relief is administered in such a manner as to encourage dependence, and even to depress wages. Mr. Rowntree refers the lower rates of wages, as compared with wages in England, to three chief causes: (1) lower efficiency of labor owing to lower standard of living; (2) aim of employers to secure a market through cheapness rather than through excellence of product; (3) weakness of the trade unions.

Two instructive chapters (xxiii and xxiv) are devoted to the "Standard of Comfort and the Cost of Living." Seventy family budgets were obtained by Mr. Rowntree's staff, compiled from account-books kept for four or five weeks under careful supervision. This method gives reliable results as to food and rent, although a longer period is desirable if data equally accurate are to be obtained regarding expenditures for clothing and for other objects for which payments are made at irregular intervals. The dietary analysis shows underfeeding in the majority of families having a weekly income of less than twenty-five shillings. The minimum wage necessary for mere physical efficiency is estimated, for the typical family of five, at 16s. 4d. a week. An interesting comparison is made with Mr. Rowntree's estimate of the minimum for a similar family in York, England, the sum in this case being 22s. 9d. It seems to the reviewer the extreme of caution to exclude from such an estimate as does the author, any allowance for the maintenance of health and the burial of the dead. The estimate of twenty-six shillings for the year's expenditure for clothing for a man seems to an American extremely low. Nevertheless, this minimum of sixteen shillings a week is above the predominant wage for unskilled labor, and more than the prevailing wage in certain skilled trades. Housing is discussed in a separate chapter, and the conclusion is reached that, owing largely to the relief from congestion afforded by the facilities for building outside of crowded centers, the Belgians, notwithstanding occasional slums, are better housed at less expense than the English workers.

In his final chapter Mr. Rowntree summarizes his work and draws from it his lessons. He would have Belgium improve her educational system, cultivate temperance, improve her factory laws, strengthen her labor organizations, and tax the unearned increment of her lands. England is strongly advised to introduce small holdings of land on a wide scale (with taxation of the unearned increment), and, as subsidiary to this measure, to promote popular education in intensive agriculture, institutions for co-operative credit, the afforestation of waste lands, and the building of light railways.

In thoroughness of research and clearness of presentation, *Land and Labour* is a worthy companion to *Poverty: a Study of Town Life*; it is a masterpiece in the application of scientific method to the analysis of social phenomena.

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